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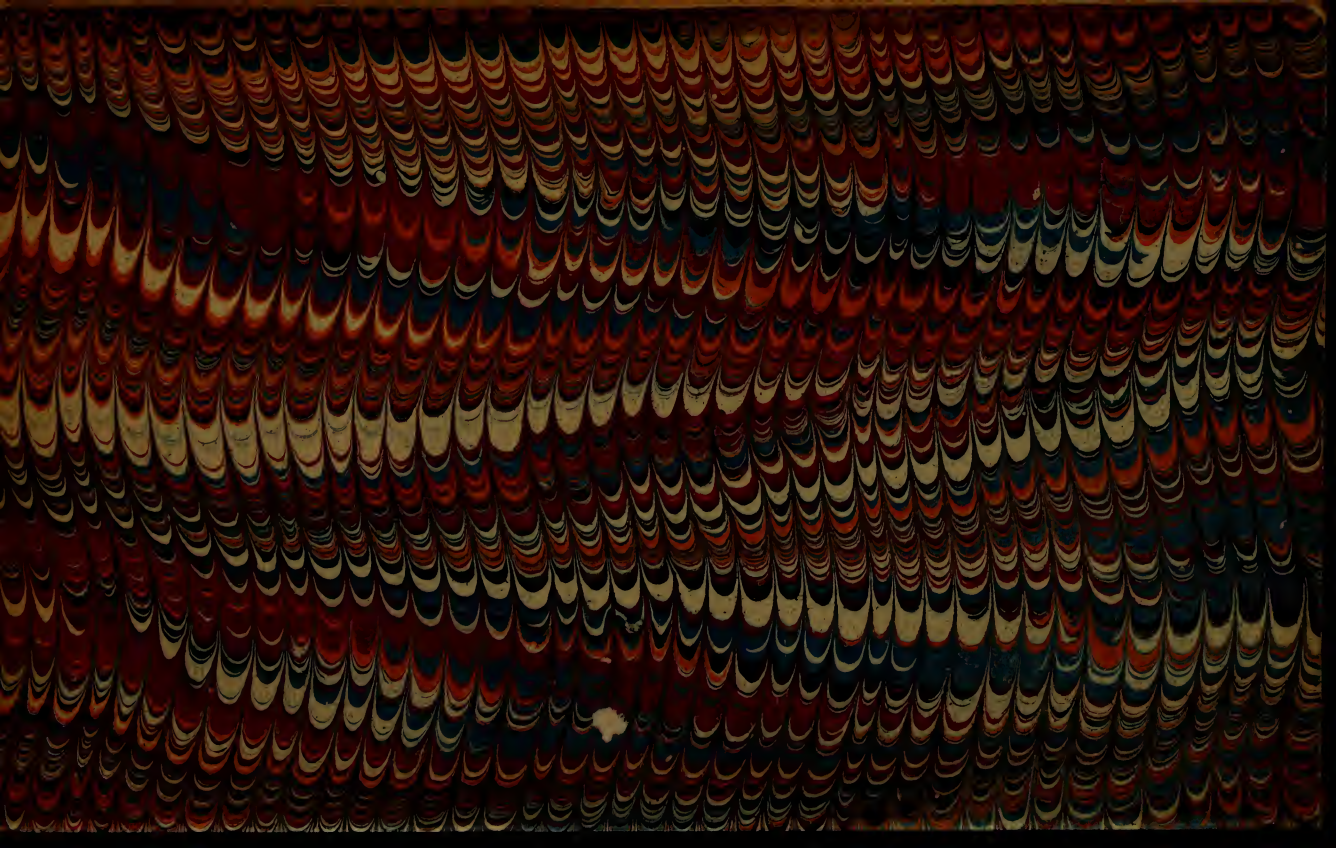

THE WAIF.

THE WAIF:

A

COLLECTION OF POEMS.

H. W. Longfellow, ed.

A Waif, the which by fortune came
Upon your seas, he claimed as property;
And yet nor his, nor his in equity,
But yours the waif by high prerogative.

THE FAERIE QUEENE.

FIFTH EDITION.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

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PROEM.

PROEM.

The day is done, and the darkness
Falls from the wings of Night,
As a feather is wafted downward
From an eagle in his flight.

I see the lights of the village
Gleam through the rain and the mist,
And a feeling of sadness comes o'er me,
That my soul cannot resist;

A feeling of sadness and longing,
That is not akin to pain,
And resembles sorrow only
As the mist resembles the rain.

Come, read to me some poem,
Some simple and heartfelt lay,
That shall soothe this restless feeling,
And banish the thoughts of day.

Not from the grand old masters,
Not from the bards sublime,
Whose distant footsteps echo
Through the corridors of time.

For, like strains of martial music,
Their mighty thoughts suggest
Life's endless toil and endeavour;
And to-night I long for rest.

Read from some humbler poet,
Whose songs gushed from his heart,
As showers from the clouds of summer,
Or tears from the eyelids start;

Who through long days of labor,
And nights devoid of ease,
Still heard in his soul the music
Of wonderful melodies.

Such songs have power to quiet
The restless pulse of care,
And come like the benediction
That follows after prayer.

Then read from the treasured volume
The poem of thy choice,
And lend to the rhyme of the poet
The beauty of thy voice.

And the night shall be filled with music,
And the cares, that infest the day,
Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,
And as silently steal away.

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

CAMBRIDGE, December, 1844.

THE WAIF.

THE WAIF.

THE SONG OF THE FORGE.

CLANG, clang! the massive anvils ring:
Clang, clang! a hundred hammers swing;
Like the thunder-rattle of a tropic sky;
The mighty blows still multiply;
Clang, clang!
Say, brothers of the dusky brow,
What are your strong arms forging now?

Clang, clang! — We forge the coulter now, —
The coulter of the kindly plough;
Sweet Mary mother, bless our toil!
May its broad furrow still unbind
To genial rains, to sun and wind,
The most benignant soil!

Clang, clang! — Our coulter's course shall be
On many a sweet and sheltered lea,
By many a streamlet's silver tide,
Amidst the song of morning birds,
Amidst the low of sauntering herds,
Amidst soft breezes which do stray
Through woodbine hedges and sweet May,
Along the green hill's side.

When regal autumn's bounteous hand
With wide-spread glory clothes the land;
When to the valleys, from the brow
Of each resplendent slope, is rolled
A ruddy sea of living gold,
We bless, — we bless the PLOUGH.

Clang, clang! — Again, my mates, what glows
Beneath the hammer's potent blows? —
Clink, clank! — We forge the giant chain,
Which bears the gallant vessel's strain,
'Midst stormy winds and adverse tides;
  Secured by this, the good ship braves
  The rocky roadstead, and the waves
Which thunder on her sides.

Anxious no more, the merchant sees
The mist drive dark before the breeze,
The storm-cloud on the hill;
  Calmly he rests, though far away
  In boisterous climes his vessel lay,
Reliant on our skill.

Say on what sands these links shall sleep,
Fathoms beneath the solemn deep;
By Afric's pestilential shore, —
By many an iceberg, lone and hoar, —
  By many a palmy Western isle,
  Basking in spring's perpetual smile, —
By stormy Labrador.

Say, shall they feel the vessel reel,
When to the battery's deadly peal
The crashing broadside makes reply?
  Or else, as at the glorious Nile,
  Hold grappling ships, that strive the while
For death or victory?

Hurrah! — Cling, clang! — Once more, what glows,
  Dark brothers of the forge, beneath
The iron tempest of your blows,
  The furnace's red breath?

Clang, clang! — A burning torrent, clear
  And brilliant, of bright sparks, is poured
Around and up in the dusky air,
  As our hammers forge the SWORD.

The sword! — a name of dread; yet when
  Upon the freeman's thigh 't is bound,
While for his altar and his hearth,
While for the land that gave him birth,
  The war-drums roll, the trumpets sound,
How sacred is it then!

Whenever for the truth and right
It flashes in the van of fight, —
Whether in some wild mountain-pass,
As that where fell Leonidas, —
Or on some sterile plain, and stern,
A Marston or a Bannockburn, —
Or 'mid fierce crags and bursting rills,
The Switzer's Alps, gray Tyrol's hills, —
Or, as when sunk the Armada's pride,
It gleams above the stormy tide, —
Still, still, whene'er the battle-word
  Is Liberty, when men do stand
  For justice and their native land,
Then Heaven bless the SWORD!

A SONG.

It is not beauty I demand,
A crystal brow, the moon's despair,
Nor the snow's daughter, a white hand,
Nor mermaid's yellow pride of hair.

Tell me not of your starry eyes,
Your lips, that seem on roses fed,
Your breasts, where Cupid tumbling lies,
Nor sleeps for kissing of his bed,—

A bloomy pair of vermeil cheeks,
Like Hebe's in her ruddiest hours,
A breath that softer music speaks
Than summer winds a-wooing flowers.

These are but gauds; nay, what are lips?
Coral beneath the ocean-stream,
Whose brink when your adventurer slips,
Full oft he perisheth on them.

And what are cheeks, but ensigns oft,
That wave hot youth to fields of blood?
Did Helen's breast, though ne'er so soft,
Do Greece or Ilium any good?

Eyes can with baleful ardor burn,
Poison can breathe, that erst perfumed;
There 's many a white hand holds an urn,
With lover's hearts to dust consumed.

For crystal brows, there 's naught within;
They are but empty cells for pride;
He who the Siren's hair would win
Is mostly strangled in the tide.

Give me, instead of beauty's bust,
A tender heart, a loyal mind,

Which with temptation I would trust,
Yet never linked with error find; —

One in whose gentle bosom I
Could pour my secret heart of woes,
Like the care-burdened honey-fly,
That hides his murmurs in the rose; —

My earthly comforter! whose love
So indefeasible might be,
That, when my spirit won above,
Hers could not stay, for sympathy.

WHY THUS LONGING?

Why thus longing, thus for ever sighing,
For the far off, unattained, and dim;
While the beautiful, all round thee lying,
Offers up its low, perpetual hymn?

Wouldst thou listen to its gentle teaching,
All thy restless yearnings it would still;
Leaf and flower and laden bee are preaching,
Thine own sphere, though humble, first to fill.

Poor indeed thou must be, if around thee
Thou no ray of light and joy canst throw;
If no silken cord of love hath bound thee
To some little world through weal and woe;

If no dear eyes thy fond love can brighten, —
No fond voices answer to thine own;
If no brother's sorrow thou canst lighten,
By daily sympathy and gentle tone.

Not by deeds that win the crowd's applauses,
Not by works that give thee world-renown,
Not by martyrdom, or vaunted crosses,
Canst thou win and wear the immortal crown.

Daily struggling, though unloved and lonely,
Every day a rich reward will give;
Thou wilt find, by hearty striving only,
And truly loving, thou canst truly live.

THE MONKS OF OLD.

I ENVY them, — those monks of old, —
Their books they read, and their beads they told;
To human softness dead and cold,
And all life's vanity.

They dwelt like shadows on the earth,
Free from the penalties of birth,
Nor let one feeling venture forth
But Christian charity.

I envy them; their cloistered hearts
Knew not the bitter pang that parts
Beings that all affection's arts
Had linked in unity.

The tomb to them was not a place
To drown the best-loved of their race,
And blot out each sweet memory's trace
In dull obscurity:

To them it was the calmest bed
That rests the aching human head:
They looked with envy on the dead,
And not with agony.

No bonds they felt, no ties they broke,
No music of the heart they woke,
When one brief moment it had spoke,
To lose it suddenly.

Peaceful they lived,—peaceful they died;
And those that did their fate abide
Saw brothers wither by their side
In all tranquillity.

They loved not, dreamed not, — for their sphere
Held not joy's visions ; — but the tear
Of broken hope, of anxious fear,
Was not their misery.

I envy them, — those monks of old ;
And when their statues I behold,
Carved in the marble, calm and cold,
How true an effigy !

I wish my heart were as calm and still
To beams that fleet, and blasts that chill,
And pangs that pay joy's spendthrift thrill
With bitter usury.

HYMN TO THE FLOWERS.

Day-stars! that ope your eyes with morn to twinkle
From rainbow galaxies of earth's creation,
And dew-drops on her lovely altars sprinkle
As a libation!

Ye matin worshippers! who, bending lowly
Before the uprisen sun, God's lidless eye,
Throw from your chalices a sweet and holy
Incense on high!

Ye bright mosaics! that with storied beauty
The floor of Nature's temple tessellate,
What numerous emblems of instructive duty
Your forms create!

'Neath cloistered boughs each floral bell that swingeth,
And tolls its perfume on the passing air,
Makes Sabbath in the fields, and ever ringeth
A call to prayer!

Not to the domes where crumbling arch and column
Attest the feebleness of mortal hand;
But to that fane most catholic and solemn
Which God hath planned!

To that cathedral, boundless as our wonder
Whose quenchless lamps the sun and moon supply,
Its choir the winds and waves, its organ thunder,
Its dome the sky!

There, — as in solitude and shade I wander
Through the lone aisles, or stretched upon the sod,
Awed by the silence, reverently ponder
The ways of God, —

Your voiceless lips, O flowers, are living preachers,
Each cup a pulpit, and each leaf a book,

Supplying to my fancy numerous teachers
From loneliest nook!

Floral apostles! that in dewy splendor
Weep without sin and blush without a crime,
O, may I deeply learn and ne'er surrender
Your love sublime!

"Thou wast not, Solomon, in all thy glory,
Arrayed," the lilies cry, "in robes like ours":
How vain your grandeur! O, how transitory
Are human flowers!

In the sweet-scented pictures, heavenly Artist!
With which thou paintest Nature's wide-spread hall,
What a delightful lesson thou impartest
Of love to all!

Not useless are ye, flowers! though made for pleasure,
Blooming o'er fields and wave by day and night,
From every source your sanction bids me treasure
Harmless delight.

Ephemeral sages! what instructers hoary
For such a world of thought could furnish scope?
Each fading calyx a *memento mori*,
Yet fount of hope!

Posthumous glories! angel-like collection!
Upraised from seed or bulb interred in earth,
Ye are to me a type of resurrection
And second birth.

Were I, O God! in churchless lands remaining,
Far from all teachers and from all divines,
My soul would find, in flowers of thy ordaining,
Priests, sermons, shrines!

WHY ARE THEY SHUT?

Why are our churches shut with jealous care,
Bolted and barred against our bosom's yearning,
Save for the few short hours of Sabbath prayer,
With the bell's tolling statedly returning?
Why are they shut?

If with diurnal drudgeries o'erwrought,
Or sick of dissipation's dull vagaries,
We wish to snatch one little space for thought,
Or holy respite, in our sanctuaries,
Why are they shut?

What! shall the church, the house of prayer no more,
Give tacit notice from its fastened portals,

That for six days 't is useless to adore,
Since God will hold no communings with mortals?
Why are they shut?

Are there no sinners in the churchless week
Who wish to sanctify a vowed repentance?
Are there no hearts bereft which fain would seek
The only balm for death's unpitying sentence?
Why are they shut?

Are there no poor, no wronged, no heirs of grief,
No sick, who, when their strength or courage falters,
Long for a moment's respite or relief,
By kneeling at the God of mercy's altars?
Why are they shut?

Are there no wicked, whom, if tempted in,
Some qualm of conscience or devout suggestion
Might suddenly redeem from future sin?
O, if there be, how solemn is the question,
Why are they shut?

In foreign climes mechanics leave their tasks
To breathe a passing prayer in their cathedrals;
There they have week-day shrines, and no one asks,
When he would kneel to them, and count his bead-rolls,
Why are they shut?

Seeing them enter sad and disconcerted,
To quit those cheering fanes with looks of gladness, —
How often have my thoughts to ours reverted!
How oft have I exclaimed, in tones of sadness,
Why are they shut?

For who within a parish church can stroll,
Wrapt in its week-day stillness and vacation,
Nor feel that in the very air his soul
Receives a sweet and hallowing lustration?
Why are they shut?

The vacant pews, blank aisles, and empty choir,
All in a deep sepulchral silence shrouded,

An awe more solemn and intense inspire,
Than when with Sabbath congregations crowded.
Why are they shut?

The echoes of our footsteps, as we tread
On hollow graves, are spiritual voices;
And, holding mental converse with the dead,
In holy reveries our soul rejoices.
Why are they shut?

If there be one,—one only,—who might share
This sanctifying week-day adoration,
Were but our churches open to his prayer,
Why,—I demand with earnest iteration,—
Why are they shut?

AFAR IN THE DESERT.

Afar in the desert I love to ride,
With the silent Bush-boy alone by my side:
When the sorrows of life the soul o'ercast,
And, sick of the present, I cling to the past;
When the eye is suffused with regretful tears,
From the fond recollections of former years;
And shadows of things that have long since fled
Flit over the brain, like ghost of the dead:
Bright visions of glory, that vanished too soon,
Day-dreams, that departed ere manhood's noon;
Attachments, by fate or by falsehood reft;
Companions of early days, lost or left;
And my native land, whose magical name
Thrills to the heart like electric flame;

The home of my childhood; the haunts of my prime;
All the passions and scenes of that rapturous time
When the feelings were young and the world was new,
Like the fresh bowers of Eden unfolding to view;
All, all now forsaken, forgotten, foregone;
And I, a lone exile, remembered by none;
My high aims abandoned, my good acts undone,
Aweary of all that is under the sun; —
With that sadness of heart which no stranger may scan,
I fly to the desert afar from man!

Afar in the desert I love to ride,
With the silent Bush-boy alone by my side:
When the wild turmoil of this wearisome life,
With its scenes of oppression, corruption, and strife;
The proud man's frown and the base man's fear,
The scorner's laugh and the sufferer's tear,
And malice, and meanness, and falsehood, and folly,
Dispose me to musing and dark melancholy;
When my bosom is full, and my thoughts are high,
And my soul is sick with the bondman's sigh, —

O, then there is freedom, and joy, and pride,
Afar in the desert alone to ride!
There is rapture to vault on the champing steed,
And to bound away with the eagle's speed,
With the death-fraught firelock in my hand,—
The only law of the desert land!

Afar in the desert I love to ride,
With the silent Bush-boy alone by my side:
Away, away from the dwellings of men,
By the wild deer's haunt, by the buffalo's glen;
By the valleys remote where the oribi plays,
Where the gnu, the gazelle, and the hartebeest graze,
And the kudu and eland unhunted recline
By the skirts of gray forests o'erhung with wild-vine;
Where the elephant browses at peace in his wood,
And the river-horse gambols unscared in the flood,
And the mighty rhinoceros wallows at will
In the fen where the wild ass is drinking his fill.

Afar in the desert I love to ride,
With the silent Bush-boy alone by my side:

O'er the brown karroo, where the fleeting cry
Of the springbok's fawn sounds plaintively,
And the timorous quagga's shrill-whistling neigh
Is heard by the fountain at twilight gray;
Where the zebra wantonly tosses his mane,
With wild hoof scouring the desolate plain;
And the fleet-footed ostrich over the waste
Speeds like a horseman who travels in haste,
Hieing away to the home of her rest,
Where she and her mate have scooped their nest,
Far hid from the pitiless plunderer's view
In the pathless depths of the parched karroo.

Afar in the desert I love to ride,
With the silent Bush-boy alone by my side:
Away, away, in the wilderness vast,
Where the white man's foot hath never passed,
And the quivered Coranna or Bechuan
Hath rarely crossed with his roving clan;
A region of emptiness, howling and drear,
Which man hath abandoned from famine and fear;
Which the snake and the lizard inhabit alone,
With the twilight bat from the yawning stone;

Where grass, nor herb, nor shrub takes root,
Save poisonous thorns that pierce the foot;
And the bitter melon, for food and drink,
Is the pilgrim's fare by the salt lake's brink;
A region of drought, where no river glides,
Nor rippling brook with osiered sides;
Where sedgy pool, nor bubbling fount,
Nor tree, nor cloud, nor misty mount,
Appears to refresh the aching eye;
But the barren earth, and the burning sky,
And the blank horizon, round and round,
Spread, void of living sight or sound.

And here, while the night-winds round me sigh,
And the stars burn bright in the midnight sky,
As I sit apart by the desert stone,
Like Elijah at Horeb's cave alone,
A still small voice comes through the wild,
Like a father consoling his fretful child,
Which banishes bitterness, wrath, and fear,
Saying, — MAN IS DISTANT, BUT GOD IS NEAR!

THE CAMP.

You know we French stormed Ratisbon; —
A mile or so away,
On a little mound Napoleon
Stood, on our storming day;
With neck outthrust, you fancy how,
Legs wide, arms locked behind,
As if to balance the prone brow
Oppressive with its mind.

Just as perhaps he mused, "My plans,
That soar, to earth may fall,
Let once my army-leader, Lannes,
Waver at yonder wall,"

Out 'twixt the battery-smokes there flew
A rider, bound on bound
Full-galloping; nor bridle drew
Until he reached the mound.

Then off there flung in smiling joy,
And held himself erect
By just his horse's mane, a boy:
You hardly could suspect, —
So tight he kept his lips compressed,
Scarce any blood came through, —
You looked twice ere you saw his breast
Was all but shot in two.

"Well," cried he, "Emperor! by God's grace
We 've got you Ratisbon!
The marshal 's in the market-place,
And you 'll be there anon
To see your flag-bird flap his vans
Where I, to heart's desire,
Perched him!" The chief's eye flashed: his plans
Soared up again like fire.

The chief's eye flashed ; but presently
Softened itself, as sheathes
A film the mother eagle's eye,
When her bruised eaglet breathes :
"You 're wounded!" "Nay," his soldier's pride
Touched to the quick, he said :
"I 'm killed, Sire!" And, his chief beside,
Smiling the boy fell dead.

SONG.

As the moon's soft splendor
O'er the faint, cold starlight of heaven
Is thrown,
So thy voice most tender
To the strings without soul has given
Its own.

The stars will awaken,
Though the moon sleep a full hour later
To-night:
No leaf will be shaken,
Whilst the dews of thy melody scatter
Delight.

Though the sound overpowers,
Sing again, with thy sweet voice revealing
A tone
Of some world far from ours,
Where music and moonlight and feeling
Are one.

AUTUMN.

Sweet Sabbath of the year!
When evening lights decay,
Thy parting steps, methinks, I hear
teal from the world away.

Amid thy silent bowers,
'T is sad, but sweet, to dwell,
Where falling leaves and fading flowers
Around me breathe farewell.

Along thy sunset skies
Their glories melt in shade;
And, like the things we fondly prize,
Seem lovelier as they fade.

A deep and crimson streak
The dying leaves disclose;
As on consumption's waning cheek,
'Mid ruin, blooms the rose.

The scene each vision brings
Of beauty in decay;
Of fair and early faded things,
Too exquisite to stay;

Of joys that come no more;
Of flowers whose bloom is fled;
Of farewells wept upon the shore;
Of friends estranged or dead;

Of all, that now may seem
To memory's tearful eye
The vanished beauty of a dream,
O'er which we gaze and sigh!

THE LAMENT OF THE IRISH EMIGRANT.

I AM sitting on the stile, Mary,
Where we sat side by side,
On a bright May morning, long ago,
When first you were my bride;
The corn was springing fresh and green,
And the lark sang loud and high,
And the red was on your lip, Mary,
And the love-light in your eye.

The place is little changed, Mary;
The day is bright as then;
The lark's loud song is in my ear,
And the corn is green again:

But I miss the soft clasp of your hand,
And your breath, warm on my cheek,
And I still keep listening for the words
You never more may speak.

'T is but a step down yonder lane,
And the little church stands near, —
The church where we were wed, Mary, —
I see the spire from here;
But the graveyard lies between, Mary,
And my step might break your rest;
For I 've laid you, darling, down to sleep,
With your baby on your breast.

I am very lonely now, Mary,
For the poor make no new friends;
But, O, they love the better still
The few our Father sends!
And you were all I had, Mary, —
My blessing and my pride;
There 's nothing left to care for now,
Since my poor Mary died!

Your's was the good, brave heart, Mary,
That still kept hoping on,
When the trust in God had left my soul,
And my arms' young strength had gone.
There was comfort ever on your lip,
And the kind look on your brow;
I bless you, Mary, for that same,
Though you cannot hear me now.

I thank you for the patient smile,
When your heart was fit to break,
When the hunger-pain was gnawing there,
And you hid it, for my sake!
I bless you for the pleasant word,
When your heart was sad and sore;
O, I 'm thankful you are gone, Mary,
Where grief can't reach you more!

I am bidding you a long farewell,
My Mary, — kind and true!
But I 'll not forget you, darling,
In the land I am going to:

They say there 's bread and work for all,
And the sun shines always there;
But I 'll not forget old Ireland,
Were it fifty times as fair!

And often in those grand old woods
I 'll sit and shut my eyes,
And my heart will travel back again
To the place where Mary lies;
And I 'll think I see the little stile
Where we sat side by side,
And the springing corn, and the bright May morn
When first you were my bride!

HE STANDETH AT THE DOOR AND KNOCKETH.

In the silent midnight watches,
List, — thy bosom door!
How it knocketh, — knocketh, — knocketh, —
Knocketh evermore!
Say not 't is thy pulse's beating:
'T is thy heart of sin;
'T is thy Saviour knocks, and crieth,
"Rise, and let me in."

Death comes on, with reckless footsteps,
To the hall and hut:
Think you Death will tarry, knocking,
Where the door is shut?

Jesus waiteth, — waiteth, — waiteth, —
But the door is fast;
Grieved, away thy Saviour goeth;
Death breaks in at last.

Then, 't is thine to stand entreating
Christ to let thee in;
At the gate of heaven beating,
Wailing for thy sin.
Nay, — alas, thou foolish virgin!
Hast thou, then, forgot?
Jesus waited long to know thee, —
Now he knows thee not.

KULNASATZ, MY REINDEER.

Kulnasatz, my reindeer,
We have a long journey to go;
The moors are vast,
And we must haste.
Our strength, I fear,
Will fail, if we are slow;
And so
Our songs will do.

Kaigè, the watery moor,
Is pleasant unto me,
Though long it be,

Since it doth to my mistress lead,
Whom I adore;
The Kilwa moor
I ne'er again will tread.

Thoughts filled my mind,
Whilst I through Kaigè passed,
Swift as the wind,
And my desire
Winged with impatient fire;
My reindeer, let us haste!

So shall we quickly end our pleasing pain, —
Behold my mistress there,
With decent motion walking o'er the plain.
Kulnasatz, my reindeer,
Look yonder, where
She washes in the lake!
See, while she swims,
The water from her purer limbs
New clearness take!

SONNET ON AUTUMN.

THERE is a fearful spirit busy now.
Already have the elements unfurled
Their banners: the great sea-wave is upcurled:
The cloud comes: the fierce winds begin to blow
About, and blindly on their errands go:
And quickly will the pale red leaves be hurled
From their dry boughs, and all the forest world,
Stripped of its pride, be like a desert show.
I love that moaning music which I hear
In the bleak gusts of Autumn; for the soul
Seems gathering tidings from another sphere,
And, in sublime, mysterious sympathy,
Man's bounding spirit ebbs and swells more high,
Accordant to the billow's loftier roll.

APRIL.

All day the low-hung clouds have dropped
Their garnered fulness down;
All day that soft gray mist hath wrapped
Hill, valley, grove, and town.

There has not been a sound to-day
To break the calm of nature;
Nor motion, I might almost say,
Of life, or living creature, —

Of waving bough, or warbling bird,
Or cattle faintly lowing;
I could have half believed I heard
The leaves and blossoms growing.

I stood to hear — I love it well —
The rain's continuous sound;
Small drops, but thick and fast they fell,
Down straight into the ground.

For leafy thickness is not yet
Earth's naked breast to screen,
Though every dripping branch is set
With shoots of tender green.

Sure, since I looked at early morn,
Those honeysuckle-buds
Have swelled to double growth; that thorn
Hath put forth larger studs;

That lilac's cleaving cones have burst,
The milk-white flowers revealing;
Even now, upon my senses first
Methinks their sweets are stealing.

The very earth, the steamy air,
Is all with fragrance rife;

And grace and beauty everywhere
Are flushing into life.

Down, down they come, — those fruitful stores!
Those earth-rejoicing drops!
A momentary deluge pours,—
Then thins, decreases, stops.

And ere the dimples on the stream
Have circled out of sight,
Lo! from the west, a parting gleam
Breaks forth of amber light.

But yet, behold! abrupt and loud,
Comes down the glittering rain;
The farewell of a passing cloud,
The fringes of her train.

SONG.

Love is a sickness full of woes,
All remedies refusing;
A plant that most with cutting grows,
Most barren with best using.
Why so?
More we enjoy it, more it dies;
If not enjoyed, it sighing cries
Heigh-ho!

Love is a torment of the mind,
A tempest everlasting;
And Jove hath made it of a kind
Not well, nor full, nor fasting.

Why so ?
More we enjoy it, more it dies ;
If not enjoyed, it sighing cries
Heigh-ho !

THE AWAKENING OF ENDYMION.

Lone upon a mountain, the pine-trees wailing round
him,
Lone upon a mountain the Grecian youth is laid;
Sleep, mystic sleep, for many a year has bound him,
Yet his beauty, like a statue's, pale and fair, is un-
decayed.
When will he awaken?

When will he awaken? a loud voice hath been crying
Night after night, and the cry has been in vain;
Winds, woods, and waves found echoes for replying,
But the tones of the beloved ones were never heard
again.
When will he awaken?
Asked the midnight's silver queen.

Never mortal eye has looked upon his sleeping;
Parents, kindred, comrades have mourned for him
as dead;
By day the gathered clouds have had him in their
keeping,
And at night the solemn shadows round his rest are
shed.
When will he awaken?

Long has been the cry of faithful Love's imploring;
Long has Hope been watching with soft eyes fixed
above;
When will the Fates, the life of life restoring,
Own themselves vanquished by much-enduring
Love?
When will he awaken?
Asks the midnight's weary queen.

Beautiful the sleep that she has watched untiring,
Lighted up with visions from yonder radiant sky,
Full of an immortal's glorious inspiring,
Softened by a woman's meek and loving sigh.
When will he awaken?

He has been dreaming of old heroic stories,
And the poet's world has entered in his soul;
He has grown conscious of life's ancestral glories,
When sages and when kings first upheld the mind's control.
When will he awaken?
Asks the midnight's stately queen.

Lo, the appointed midnight! the present hour is fated;
It is Endymion's planet that rises on the air;
How long, how tenderly his goddess love has waited,
Waited with a love too mighty for despair!
Soon he will awaken!

Soft amid the pines is a sound as if of singing,
Tones that seem the lute's from the breathing flowers depart;
Not a wind that wanders o'er Mount Latmos but is bringing
Music that is murmured from Nature's inmost heart.
Soon he will awaken
To his and midnight's queen!

Lovely is the green earth, — she knows the hour is
holy;
Starry are the heavens, lit with eternal joy;
Light like their own is dawning sweet and slowly
O'er the fair and sculptured forehead of that yet
dreaming boy.
Soon he will awaken!

Red as the red rose towards the morning turning,
Warms the youth's lip to the watcher's near his own;
While the dark eyes open, bright, intense, and burning
With a life more glorious than, ere they closed, was
known.
Yes, he has awakened
For the midnight's happy queen!

What is this old history, but a lesson given,
How true love still conquers by the deep strength
of truth, —
How all the impulses, whose native home is heaven,
Sanctify the visions of hope, and faith, and youth?
'T is for such they waken!

When every worldly thought is utterly forsaken,
Comes the starry midnight, felt by life's gifted few;
Then will the spirit from its earthly sleep awaken
To a being more intense, more spiritual, and true.
So doth the soul awaken,
Like that youth to night's fair queen!

THE LILY OF NITHSDALE.

She 's gane to dwell in heaven, my lassie,
  She 's gane to dwell i' heaven!
Ye 're owre pure, quo' the voice of God,
  For dwelling out o' heaven!

O, what 'll she do in heaven, my lassie?
  O, what 'll she do in heaven?
She 'll mix her ain thoughts wi' angels' sangs,
  And make them mair meet for heaven!

She was beloved by a', my lassie,
  She was beloved by a';
But an angel fell in luve wi' her,
  An' took her frae us a'.

Low there thou lies, my lassie,
Low there thou lies;
A bonnier form ne'er went to the yird,
Nor frae it will arise.

I looked on thy death-cold face, my lassie,
I looked on thy death-cold face;
Thou seemed a lilie new cut in the bud,
An' fading in its place.

I looked on thy death-shut eye, my lassie,
I looked on thy death-shut eye;
An' a lovelier light i' the brow of heaven
Fell Time shall ne'er destroy.

Thy lips were ruddie and calm, my lassie,
Thy lips were ruddie and calm;
But gane was the holy breath o' heaven,
To sing the evening psalm.

There 's nought but dust now mine, lassie;
There 's nought but dust now mine;
My saul 's wi' thee i' the cauld grave,
An' why should I stay behin'?

TO THE MOCKING-BIRD.

Winged mimic of the woods! thou motley fool,
Who shall thy gay buffoonery describe?
Thine ever-ready notes of ridicule
Pursue thy fellows still with jest and gibe.
Wit, — sophist, — songster, — Yorick of thy tribe,
Thou sportive satirist of Nature's school,
To thee the palm of scoffing we ascribe,
Arch scoffer, and mad Abbot of Misrule!
For such thou art by day, — but all night long
Thou pour'st a soft, sweet, pensive, solemn strain,
As if thou didst in this, thy moonlight song,
Like to the melancholy Jacques, complain,
Musing on falsehood, violence, and wrong,
And sighing for thy motley coat again.

CHURCH-BELLS HEARD AT EVENING.

O MELANCHOLY bells, who toll the way
To dusty death!
O damp, green church-yard, — mounds of clay,
Arched inward by gray bones, which once, men say,
Were moved by breath!

O, never seek I ye, when the summer day
Is past and flown!
But rather do I wander far away,
Where'er kind voices sound, or children play,
Or love is known;

By some friend's quiet hearth, where gentle words
Unsought are won;
'Mongst cheerful music sweet of morning birds;
Or list to lowings deep of distant herds,
At set of sun!

Where Nature breathes her blossoms, sweet thoughts rise,
Or rivers run,—
Where'er life's sunny summer spirit flies,
There let me be, until my body dies,
And all is done!

THE DEATH-BED.

We watched her breathing through the night,
Her breathing soft and low,
As in her breast the wave of life
Kept heaving to and fro.

So silently we seemed to speak,
So slowly moved about,
As we had lent her half our powers
To eke her being out.

Our very hopes belied our fears,
Our fears our hopes belied ;
We thought her dying when she slept,
And sleeping when she died.

For when the morn came dim and sad
And chill with early showers,
Her quiet eyelids closed ; — she had
Another morn than ours.

THE EVENING HOUR.

This is the hour when memory wakes
Visions of joy that could not last;
This is the hour when fancy takes
A survey of the past!

She brings before the pensive mind
The hallowed scenes of earlier years,
And friends who long have been consigned
To silence and to tears!

The few we liked, the one we loved,—
A sacred band!—come stealing on;
And many a form far hence removed,
And many a pleasure gone!

Friendships that now in death are hushed,
And young affection's broken chain,
And hopes that fate too quickly crushed,
In memory live again!

Few watch the fading gleams of day,
But muse on hopes as quickly flown;
Tint after tint they died away,
Till all at last were gone!

This is the hour when fancy wreathes
Her spells round joys that could not last;
This is the hour when memory breathes
A sigh to pleasures past!

LOVE.

He stood beside a cottage lone,
And listened to a lute,
One summer eve, when the breeze was gone,
And the nightingale was mute.
The moon was watching on the hill,
The stream was staid, and the maples still,
To hear a lover's suit,
That — half a vow, and half a prayer —
Spoke less of hope than of despair:
And rose into the calm, soft air,
As sweet and low
As he had heard — O, woe! O, woe! —
The flutes of angels, long ago!

" By every hope that earthward clings,
By faith that mounts on angel-wings,
By dreams that make night-shadows bright,
And truths that turn our day to night,
By childhood's smile, and manhood's tear,
By pleasure's day, and sorrow's year,
By all the strains that fancy sings,
And pangs that time so surely brings, —
For joy or grief, for hope or fear,
For all hereafter as for here,
In peace or strife, in storm or shine,
My soul is wedded unto thine ! "

And for its soft and sole reply,
A murmur, and a sweet, low sigh,
But not a spoken word ;
And yet they made the waters start
Into his eyes who heard,
For they told of a most loving heart,
In a voice like that of a bird ; —
Of a heart that loved, though it loved in vain, —
A grieving, and yet not a pain, —

A love that took an early root,
And had an early doom,
Like trees that never grow to fruit,
And early shed their bloom, —
Of vanished hopes and happy smiles,
All lost for evermore;
Like ships, that sailed for sunny isles,
But never came to shore!

NIGHT AMONG THE ALPS.

Come, golden Evening! in the west
Enthrone the storm-dispelling sun,
And let the triple rainbow rest
O'er all the mountain-tops. — 'T is done;
The tempest ceases; bold and bright,
The rainbow shoots from hill to hill;
Down sinks the sun; on presses night;
Mont Blanc is lovely still!

There take thy stand, my spirit! — spread
The world of shadows at thy feet;
And mark how calmly overhead
The stars, like saints in glory, meet:

While, hid in solitude sublime,
Methinks I muse on Nature's tomb,
And hear the passing foot of Time
Step through the silent gloom.

All in a moment, crash on crash,
From precipice to precipice,
An avalanche's ruins dash
Down to the nethermost abyss,
Invisible ; the ear alone
Pursues the uproar till it dies ;
Echo to echo, groan for groan,
From deep to deep, replies.

Silence again the darkness seals,
Darkness that may be felt ; — but soon
The silver-clouded east reveals
The midnight spectre of the moon ;
In half-eclipse she lifts her horn, —
Yet o'er the host of heaven supreme
Brings the faint semblance of a morn,
With her awakening beam.

Ah! at her touch, these Alpine heights
Unreal mockeries appear;
With blacker shadows, ghastlier lights,
Emerging, as she climbs the sphere;
A crowd of apparitions pale!
I hold my breath in chill suspense, —
They seem so exquisitely frail, —
Lest they should vanish hence.

I breathe again, I freely breathe;
Thee, Leman's Lake, once more I trace,
Like Dian's crescent, far beneath,
As beautiful as Dian's face:
Pride of the land that gave me birth!
All that thy waves reflect I love,
Where heaven itself, brought down to earth,
Looks fairer than above.

Safe on thy banks again I stray;
The trance of poesy is o'er,
And I am here at dawn of day,
Gazing on mountains as before,

Where all the strange mutations wrought
Were magic feats of my own mind ;
For, in that fairy land of thought,
Whate'er I seek, I find.

THEY ARE ALL GONE.

They are all gone into a world of light,
And I alone sit lingering here!
Their very memory is fair and bright,
And my sad thoughts doth clear.

It glows and glitters in my cloudy breast,
Like stars upon some gloomy grove,
Or those faint beams in which the hill is dressed,
After the sun's remove.

I see them walking in an air of glory,
Whose light doth trample on my days, —
My days, which are at best but dull and hoary,
Mere glimmerings and decays.

O holy hope, and high humility,
High as the heavens above!
These are your walks, and ye have showed them me,
To kindle my cold love.

Dear, beauteous Death! the jewel of the just!
Shining nowhere but in the dark!
What mysteries do lie beyond thy dust,
Could man outlook that mark!

He that hath found some fledged bird's nest may know,
At first sight, if the bird be flown;
But what fair field or grove he sings in now,
That is to him unknown.

And yet, as angels, in some brighter dreams,
Call to the soul, when man doth sleep,
So some strange thoughts transcend our wonted themes,
And into glory peep!

TO A LADY.

Lady, too fair! the sleepless mariner,
With anxious heart, scanneth the midnight sky;
On one bright star alone, though hosts shine near,
Fixing his eye.

For, though the sea in cloud-high waves may rise,
Though the storm rage, and felon winds rebel,
He knows that sweet star beameth in the skies
Unchangeable.

Alas for him who life's rough sea would try,
Fixing his gaze on meteors blazing far,
Making the changeful beam of beauty's eye
His polar star!

The seaman trusts, indeed, nor trusts in vain,
For constant are the bright-eyed host of heaven;
While the swift changing of the fickle main
To beauty 's given.

But thou, who in the pride of beauty brave
Shinest brighter than the fairest star on high,
Take not thy pattern from the fickle wave,
But from the sky!

EACH IN ALL.

Little thinks, in the field, yon red-cloaked clown,
Of thee, from the hill-top looking down;
And the heifer, that lows in the upland farm,
Far heard, lows not thine ear to charm;
The sexton, tolling the bell at noon,
Dreams not that great Napoleon
Stops his horse, and lists with delight,
As his files sweep round yon distant height;
Nor knowest thou what argument
Thy life to thy neighbour's creed has lent:
All are needed by each one,
Nothing is fair or good alone.

I sought the sparrow's note from heaven,
Singing at dawn on the alder bough;
I brought him home in his nest at even; —
He sings the song, but it pleases not now;
For I did not bring home the river and sky;
He sang to my ear; *they* sang to my eye.

The delicate shells lay on the shore;
The bubbles of the latest wave
Fresh pearls to their enamel gave;
And the bellowing of the savage sea
Greeted their safe escape to me;
I wiped away the weeds and foam,
And fetched my sea-born treasures home;
But the poor, unsightly, noisome things
Had left their beauty on the shore
With the sun, and the sand, and the wild uproar!

Then I said, "I covet Truth;
Beauty is unripe childhood's cheat, —
I leave it behind with the games of youth."
As I spoke, beneath my feet

The ground-pine curled its pretty wreath,
Running over the club-moss burrs;
I inhaled the violet's breath;
Around me stood the oaks and firs;
Pine cones and acorns lay on the ground;
Above me soared the eternal sky,
Full of light and Deity;
Again I saw, again I heard,
The rolling river, the morning bird; —
Beauty through my senses stole,
I yielded myself to the perfect whole.

THE LOVER TO THE GLOWWORMS.

Ye living lamps, by whose dear light
The nightingale does sit so late,
And, studying all the summer night,
Her matchless songs does meditate!

Ye country comets, that portend
No war, nor prince's funeral,
Shining unto no other end
Than to presage the grass's fall!

Ye glowworms, whose officious flame
To wandering mowers shows the way,
That in the night have lost their aim,
And after foolish fires do stray!

Your courteous lights in vain you waste,
Since Juliana here is come;
For she my mind hath so displaced,
That I shall never find my home.

HYMN OF THE CHURCH-YARD.

Ah me! this is a sad and silent city;
Let me walk softly o'er it, and survey
Its grassy streets with melancholy pity!
Where are its children? where their gleesome play?
Alas! their cradled rest is cold and deep,—
Their playthings are thrown by, and they asleep.

This is pale beauty's bourn: but where the beautiful,
Whom I have seen come forth at evening's hours,
Leading their aged friends, with feelings dutiful,
Amid the wreaths of spring, to gather flowers?

Alas! no flowers are here but flowers of death,
And those who once were sweetest sleep beneath.

This is a populous place: but where the bustling,—
The crowded buyers of the noisy mart,—
The lookers on,—the snowy garments rustling,—
The money-changers,—and the men of art?
Business, alas! hath stopped in mid career,
And none are anxious to resume it here.

This is the home of grandeur: where are they,—
The rich, the great, the glorious, and the wise?
Where are the trappings of the proud, the gay,—
The gaudy guise of human butterflies?
Alas! all lowly lies each lofty brow,
And the green sod dizens their beauty now.

This is a place of refuge and repose:
Where are the poor, the old, the weary wight,
The scorned, the humble, and the man of woes,
Who wept for morn, and sighed again for night?
Their sighs at last have ceased, and here they sleep
Beside their scorners, and forget to weep.

This is a place of gloom: where are the gloomy?
The gloomy are not citizens of death:
Approach and look, where the long grass is plumy;
See them above! they are not found beneath!
For these low denizens, with artful wiles,
Nature, in flowers, contrives her mimic smiles.

This is a place of sorrow: friends have met
And mingled tears o'er those who answered not:
And where are they whose eyelids then were wet?
Alas! their griefs, their tears, are all forgot;
They, too, are landed in this silent city,
Where there is neither love, nor tears, nor pity.

This is a place of fear: the firmest eye
Hath quailed to see its shadowy dreariness;
But Christian hope, and heavenly prospects high,
And earthly cares, and nature's weariness,
Have made the timid pilgrim cease to fear,
And long to end his painful journey here.

DIRGE IN AUTUMN.

'T is an autumnal eve, — the low winds sighing
To wet leaves, rustling as they hasten by;
The eddying gust to tossing boughs replying,
And ebon darkness filling all the sky;
The moon, pale mistress, palled in solemn vapor,
The rack, swift wandering through the void above,
As I, a mourner by my lonely taper,
Send back to faded hours the plaint of love.

Blossoms of peace, once in my pathway springing,
Where have your brightness and your splendor gone?

And thou, whose voice came sweet to me as singing,
What region holds thee in the vast unknown?
What star, far brighter than the rest, contains thee,
Beloved, departed, — empress of my heart?
What bond of full beatitude enchains thee
In realms unveiled by pen or prophet's art?

Ah! loved and lost! in these autumnal hours,
When fairy colors deck the painted tree,
When the vast woodlands seem a sea of flowers,
O, then my soul, exulting, bounds to thee;
Springs, as to clasp thee yet in this existence,
Yet to behold thee at my lonely side!
But the fond vision melts at once in distance,
And my sad heart gives echo, — She has died!

Yes! when the morning of her years was brightest,
That angel presence into dust went down;
While yet with rosy dreams her rest was lightest,
Death, for the olive, wove the cypress crown;
Sleep, which no waking knows, o'ercame her bosom, —
O'ercame her large, bright, spiritual eyes;

Spared in her bower connubial one fair blossom, —
Then bore her spirit to the upper skies.

There let me meet her, when, life's struggles over,
The pure in love and thought their faith renew,
Where man's forgiving and redeeming Lover
Spreads out his paradise to every view.
Let the wild autumn, with its leaves descending,
Howl on the winter's verge! — yet spring will come;
So, my freed soul, no more 'gainst fate contending,
With all it loveth, shall regain its home.

THE DROP OF DEW.

See how the orient dew,
Shed from the bosom of the morn
Into the blowing roses,
Is careless of its mansion new:
For the clear region where 't was born
It in itself incloses;
And in its little globe's extent,
Frames, as it can, its native element.
How it the purple flower does slight,
Scarce touching where it lies;
But, gazing back upon the skies,
Shines with a mournful light,

Like its own tear!
Because so long divided from the sphere,
Restless it rolls, and unsecure,
Trembling, lest it grow impure;
Till the warm sun pities its pain,
And to the skies exhales it back again.
So the soul, that drop, that ray,
Of the clear fountain of eternal day,
Could it within the human flower be seen,
Remembering still its former height,
Shuns the sweet leaves and blossoms green;
And, recollecting its own light,
Does, in its pure and circling thoughts, express
The greater heaven in a heaven less.
In how coy a figure wound,
Every way it turns away!
So the world excluding round,
Yet receiving in the day:
Dark beneath, but bright above;
Here disdaining, there in love.
How loose and easy hence to go!
How girt and ready to ascend!

Moving but on a point below,
It all about does upwards bend.
Such did the manna's sacred dew distil,
White and entire, although congealed and chill;
Congealed on earth; but does, dissolving, run
Into the glories of the almighty sun.

WISHES.

Whoe'er she be,
That not impossible she,
That shall command my heart and me;

Where'er she lie,
Locked up from mortal eye
In shady leaves of destiny;

Till that ripe birth
Of studied fate stand forth
And teach her fair steps to our earth;

Till that divine
Idea take a shrine
Of crystal flesh, through which to shine;

Meet you her, my wishes,
Bespeak her to my blisses,
And be ye called my absent kisses.

I wish her . .
. . . . .
. . . . .

A face that 's best
By its own beauty dressed,
And can alone command the rest;

. . . . .

A cheek where youth
And blood, with pen of truth,
Write what the reader sweetly ru'th;

. . . . .

Eyes that displace
The neighbour diamond, and outface
That sunshine by their own sweet grace;

Tresses that wear
Jewels, but to declare
How much themselves more precious are,

Whose native ray
Can tame the wanton day
Of gems, that in their bright shades play;
. . . . .
Days that need borrow
No part of their good morrow
From a forespent night of sorrow;

Days that, in spite
Of darkness, by the light
Of a clear mind are day all night;
. . . . .
Life that dares send
A challenge to its end,
And, when it comes, say, Welcome, friend!

Sydnæan showers
Of sweet discourse, whose powers
Can crown old Winter's head with flowers;

. . . . .

Whate'er delight
Can make Day's forehead bright,
Or give down to the wings of Night;

In her whole frame
Have nature all the name,
And art and ornament the shame.

. . . . .

She that dares be
What these lines wish to see;
I seek no farther; it is she.

TO ALTHEA, FROM PRISON.

When Love with unconfined wings
Hovers within my gates,
And my divine Althea brings
To whisper at the grates:
When I lie tangled in her hair,
And fettered to her eye;
The birds, that wanton in the air,
Know no such liberty.

When flowing cups run swiftly round
With no allaying Thames,
Our careless heads with roses bound,
Our hearts with loyal flames:

When thirsty grief in wine we steep,
When healths and draughts go free ;
Fishes, that tipple in the deep,
Know no such liberty.

When, like committed linnet, I
With shriller throat shall sing
The sweetness, mercy, majesty,
And glories of my KING :
When I shall voice aloud, how good
He is, how great should be ;
Enlarged winds, that curl the flood,
Know no such liberty.

Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage ;
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for an hermitage :
If I have freedom in my love,
And in my soul am free ;
Angels alone, that soar above,
Enjoy such liberty.

DEATH OF A CHILD.

I CANNOT make him dead!
His fair, sunshiny head
Is ever bounding round my study chair;
Yet, when my eyes, now dim
With tears, I turn to him,
The vision vanishes; — he is not there!

I walk my parlour floor,
And, through the open door,
I hear a footfall on his chamber stair;
I 'm stepping toward the hall
To give the boy a call;
And then bethink me that — he is not there!

I thread the crowded street:
A satchelled lad I meet,
With the same beaming eyes and colored hair;
And, as he 's running by,
Follow him with my eye,
Scarcely believing that — he is not there!

I know his face is hid
Under the coffin lid;
Closed are his eyes; cold is his forehead fair;
My hand that marble felt;
O'er it in prayer I knelt;
Yet my heart whispers that — he is not there!

I cannot make him dead!
When passing by the bed,
So long watched over with parental care,
My spirit and my eye
Seek it inquiringly,
Before the thought comes that — he is not there!

When, at the cool, gray break
Of day, from sleep I wake,
With my first breathing of the morning air
My soul goes up with joy
To Him who gave my boy;
Then comes the sad thought, that — he is not there!

When, at the day's calm close,
Before we seek repose,
I 'm with his mother, offering up our prayer;
Whate'er I may be saying,
I am, in spirit, praying
For our boy's spirit, though — he is not there!

Not there! Where, then, is he? —
The form I used to see
Was but the raiment that he used to wear;
The grave, that now doth press
Upon that cast-off dress,
Is but his wardrobe locked, — *he* is not there!

He lives! — in all the past
He lives; nor, to the last,
Of seeing him again will I despair:
In dreams I see him now;
And on his angel brow
I see it written, "Thou shalt see me there!"

Yes, we all live to God!
Father, thy chastening rod
So help us, thine afflicted ones, to bear,
That, in the spirit land,
Meeting at thy right hand,
'T will be our heaven to find that — he is there!

HUMAN PRIDE.

Why should man's high aspiring mind
Burn in him with so proud a breath,
When all his haughty views can find
In this world yields to death?
The fair, the brave, the vain, the wise,
The rich and poor, the great and small,
Are each but worms' anatomies,
To strew his quiet hall.

Power may make many earthly gods,
Where gold or bribery's guilt prevails;
But death's unwelcome, honest odds
Kick o'er the unequal scales.

The flattered great may clamors raise
Of power, — and their own weakness hide ;
But death shall find unlooked-for ways
To end the farce of pride.

An arrow, hurtled e'er so high,
E'en by a giant's sinewy strength,
In time's untraced eternity,
Goes but a pigmy length, —
Nay, whirring from the tortured string,
With all its pomp of hurried flight,
'T is by the skylark's little wing
Outmeasured in its height.

Just so man's boasted strength and power
Shall fade before death's lightest stroke ;
Laid lower than the meanest flower, —
Whose pride o'ertopped the oak:
And he, who, like a blighting blast,
Dispeopled worlds with war's alarms,
Shall be himself destroyed, at last,
By poor despised worms.

Tyrants in vain their powers secure,
And awe slaves' murmurs with a frown ;
But unawed death at last is sure
To sap the Babels down.
A stone thrown upward to the sky
Will quickly meet the ground again :
So men-gods of earth's vanity
Shall drop at last to men ;

And power and pomp their all resign,
Blood-purchased thrones and banquet-halls.
Fate waits to sack ambition's shrine
As bare as prison walls,
Where the poor suffering wretch bows down
To laws a lawless power hath passed ; —
And pride, and power, and king, and clown
Shall be death's slaves at last.

Time, the prime minister of death,
There 's naught can bribe his honest will ;
He stops the richest tyrant's breath,
And lays his mischief still :

Each wicked scheme for power he stops,
With grandeur's false and mock display ;
As eve's shades from high mountain-tops
Fade with the rest away.

Death levels all things in his march,
Naught can resist his mighty strength :
The palace and triumphal arch
Shall mete their shadows' length :
The rich, the poor, one common bed
Shall find in the unhonored grave,
Where weeds shall crown alike the head
Of tyrant and of slave.

TO LUCASTA.

If to be absent were to be
Away from thee;
Or that, when I am gone,
You or I were alone;
Then, my Lucasta, might I crave
Pity from blustering wind or swallowing wave.

But I 'll not sigh one blast or gale
To swell my sail,
Or pay a tear to 'suage
The foaming blue-god's rage;
For, whether he will let me pass
Or no, I 'm still as happy as I was.

Though seas and lands be 'twixt us both,
Our faith and troth,
Like separated souls,
All time and space controls:
Above the highest sphere we meet,
Unseen, unknown, and greet as angels greet.

So, then, we do anticipate
Our after-fate,
And are alive i' th' skies,
If thus our lips and eyes
Can speak like spirits unconfined
In heaven,—their earthly bodies left behind.

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

Where are the mighty ones of ages past,
Who o'er the world their inspiration cast, —
Whose memories stir our spirits like a blast? —
Where are the dead?

Where are old empires' sinews snapped and gone?
Where is the Persian? Mede? Assyrian?
Where are the kings of Egypt? Babylon? —
Where are the dead?

Where are the mighty ones of Greece? Where be
The men of Sparta and Thermopylæ?
The conquering Macedonian, where is he? —
Where are the dead?

Where are Rome's founders? Where her chiefest
son,
Before whose name the whole known world bowed
down, —
Whose conquering arm chased the retreating sun? —
Where are the dead?

Where 's the bard-warrior-king of Albion's state,
A pattern for earth's sons to emulate, —
The truly, nobly, wisely, goodly great? —
Where are the dead?

Where is Gaul's hero, who aspired to be
A second Cæsar in his mastery, —
To whom earth's crowned ones trembling bent the
knee? —
Where are the dead?

Where is Columbia's son, her darling child,
Upon whose birth Virtue and Freedom smiled, —
The Western Star, bright, pure, and undefiled? —
Where are the dead?

Where are the sons of song, the soul-inspired, —
The bard of Greece, whose muse (of heaven acquired)
With admiration ages past has fired, —
The classic dead?

Where is the fairie minstrel? and, O, where
Is that lone bard who dungeon gyves did bear,
For his love-song breathed in a princess' ear, —
The gentle dead?

Where is the poet who in death was crowned, —
Whose clay-cold temples laurel chaplets bound,
Mocking the dust, — in life no honor found, —
Th' insulted dead?

Greater than all, — an earthly sun enshrined, —
Where is the king of bards? Where shall we find
The Swan of Avon, — monarch of the mind, —
The mighty dead?

Did they all die, when did their bodies die,
Like the brute dead passing for ever by?

Then wherefore was their intellect so high, —
The mighty dead?

Why was it not confined to earthly sphere, —
To earthly wants? If it must perish here,
Why did they languish for a bliss more dear, —
The blessed dead?

All things in nature are proportionate:
Is man alone in an imperfect state, —
He who doth all things rule and regulate? —
Then where the dead?

If here they perished, where their beings germ, —
Here were their thoughts', their hopes', their wishes'
term, —
Why should a giant's strength propel a worm? —
The dead! the dead!

There are no dead! The forms, indeed, did die,
That cased the ethereal beings now on high:
'T is but the outward covering is thrown by: —
This is the dead!

The spirits of the lost, of whom we sing,
Have perished not; they have but taken wing, —
Changing an earthly for a heavenly spring:
There are the dead!

Thus is all nature perfect. Harmony
Pervades the whole, by His all-wise decree,
With whom are those, to vast infinity,
We misname dead.

A CHRISTMAS HYMN.

It was the calm and silent night!
Seven hundred years and fifty-three
Had Rome been growing up to might,
And now was queen of land and sea.
No sound was heard of clashing wars,—
Peace brooded o'er the hushed domain:
Apollo, Pallas, Jove, and Mars
Held undisturbed their ancient reign,
In the solemn midnight,
Centuries ago.

'T was in the calm and silent night,
The senator of haughty Rome
Impatient urged his chariot's flight,
From lordly revel rolling home:
Triumphal arches gleaming swell
His breast with thoughts of boundless sway;
What recked the Roman what befell
A paltry province far away,
In the solemn midnight,
Centuries ago?

Within that province far away,
Went plodding home a weary boor;
A streak of light before him lay,
Fallen through a half-shut stable-door
Across his path. He passed, — for naught
Told what was going on within;
How keen the stars, his only thought, —
The air, how calm, and cold, and thin,
In the solemn midnight,
Centuries ago!

O, strange indifference! low and high
Drowsed over common joys and cares;
The earth was still, — but knew not why
The world was listening, — unawares.
How calm a moment may precede
One that shall thrill the world for ever!
To that still moment, none would heed,
Man's doom was linked no more to sever,
In the solemn midnight,
Centuries ago!

It is the calm and solemn night!
A thousand bells ring out, and throw
Their joyous peals abroad, and smite
The darkness, — charmed and holy now!
The night that erst no shame had worn,
To it a happy name is given;
For in that stable lay, new-born,
The peaceful Prince of earth and heaven,
In the solemn midnight,
Centuries ago!

NO MORE.

No MORE! a harp-string's deep, sad, breaking tone,
A last low summer breeze, a far-off knell,
A dying echo of rich music gone,
Breathe through those words, — those murmurs of farewell, —
No more!

To dwell in peace with home affections bound,
To know the sweetness of a mother's voice,
To feel the spirit of her love around,
And in the blessing of her age rejoice, —
No more!

A dirge-like sound! — to greet the early friend
Unto the hearth, his place of many days;
In the glad song with kindred lips to blend,
Or join the household laughter by the blaze, —
No more!

Through woods that shadowed our first years, to rove,
With all our native music in the air;
To watch the sunset with the eyes we love,
And turn and meet our own heart's answer there, —
No more!

Words of despair! — yet earth's, all earth's, the woe
Their passion breathes, — the desolately deep!
That sound in heaven, — O, image, then, the flow
Of gladness in its tones! — to part, to weep, —
No more!

To watch in dying hope affection's wane,
To see the beautiful from life depart,
To wear impatiently a secret chain,
To waste the untold riches of the heart, —
No more!

Through long, long years to seek, to strive, to yearn
For human love, and never quench that thirst;
To pour the soul out, winning no return,
O'er fragile idols, by delusion nursed, —
No more!

On things that fail us, reed by reed, to lean;
To mourn the changed, the far away, the dead;
To send our searching spirits through the unseen,
Intensely questioning for treasures fled, —
No more!

Words of triumphant music! bear we on
The weight of life, the chain, the ungenial air;
Their deathless meaning, when our tasks are done,
To learn in joy; — to struggle, to despair, —
No more!

TO DAFFODILS.

Fair daffodils, we weep to see
You haste away so soon;
As yet the early-rising sun
Has not attained his noon:
Stay, stay,
Until the hastening day
Has run
But to the even-song;
And, having prayed together, we
Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay, as you;
We have as short a spring,
As quick a growth to meet decay,
As you, or any thing:
We die,
As your hours do; and dry
Away
Like to the summer's rain,
Or as the pearls of morning dew,
Ne'er to be found again.

TO PRIMROSES.

Why do ye weep, sweet babes? Can tears
Speak grief in you,
Who were but born
Just as the modest morn
Teemed her refreshing dew?
Alas! you have not known that shower
That mars a flower;
Nor felt th' unkind
Breath of a blasting wind;
Nor are ye worn with years;
Or warped, as we,
Who think it strange to see
Such pretty flowers, like to orphans young,
To speak by tears before ye have a tongue

Speak, whimpering younglings; and make known
The reason why
Ye droop and weep.
Is it for want of sleep,
Or childish lullaby?
Or, that ye have not seen as yet
The violet?
Or brought a kiss
From that sweetheart to this?
No, no; this sorrow, shown
By your tears shed,
Would have this lecture read,
"That things of greatest, so of meanest worth,
Conceived with grief are, and with tears brought forth."

TO BLOSSOMS.

Fair pledges of a fruitful tree,
Why do ye fall so fast?
Your date is not so past,
But you may stay yet here awhile
To blush and gently smile,
And go at last.

What! were ye born to be
An hour or half's delight,
And so to bid good night?
'T is pity nature brought ye forth
Merely to show your worth,
And lose you quite.

But you are lovely leaves, where we
May read how soon things have
Their end, though ne'er so brave;
And, after they have shown their pride,
Like you, awhile, they glide
Into the grave.

THE GRASSHOPPER.

TO MY NOBLE FRIEND, MR. CHARLES COTTON.

O THOU, that swing'st upon the waving hair
Of some well filled oaten beard,
Drunk every night with a delicious tear
Dropped thee from heaven, where now thou 'rt reared!

The joys of earth and air are thine entire,
That with thy feet and wings dost hop and fly;
And when thy poppy works, thou dost retire
To thy carved acorn-bed to lie.

Up with the day, the sun thou welcom'st then,
Sport'st in the gilt-plats of his beams,
And all these merry days mak'st merry men,
Thyself, and melancholy streams.

But, ah, the sickle! golden ears are cropped;
Ceres and Bacchus bid good night;
Sharp, frosty fingers all your flowers have topped,
And what scythes spared, winds shave off quite.

Poor, verdant fool! and now, green ice! thy joys
Large and as lasting as thy perch of grass,
Bid us lay in 'gainst winter rains, and poise
Their floods with an o'erflowing glass.

Thou best of men and friends! we will create
A genuine summer in each other's breast;
And, spite of this cold time and frozen fate,
Thaw us a warm seat to our rest.

Our sacred hearths shall burn eternally
As vestal flames; the north-wind, he
Shall strike his frost-stretched wings, dissolve, and fly
This Ætna in epitome.

Dropping December shall come weeping in,
Bewail th' usurping of his reign;

But, when in showers of old Greek we begin,
Shall cry, he hath his crown again!

Night, as clear Hesper, shall our tapers whip
From the light casements where we play,
And the dark hag from her black mantle strip,
And stick there everlasting day.

Thus, richer than untempted kings are we,
That, asking nothing, nothing need:
Though lord of all what seas embrace, yet he
That wants himself is poor indeed.

SWEET PHOSPHOR, BRING THE DAY.

Will 't ne'er be morning? Will that promised light
Ne'er break and clear those clouds of night?
Sweet Phosphor, bring the day,
Whose conquering ray
May chase these fogs! Sweet Phosphor, bring the day!

How long, how long shall these benighted eyes
Languish in shades, like feeble flies
Expecting Spring? How long shall darkness soil
The face of earth, and thus beguile
Our souls of sprightful action? When, when will day
Begin to dawn, whose new-born ray

May gild the weathercocks of our devotion,
And give our unsouled souls new motion ?
Sweet Phosphor, bring the day !
Thy light will fray
These horrid mists : Sweet Phosphor, bring the day !

Let those have night, that slyly love to immure
Their cloistered crimes, and sin secure ;
Let those have night, that blush to let men know
The baseness they ne'er blush to do ;
Let those have night, that love to have a nap
And loll in Ignorance's lap ;
Let those, whose eyes, like owls, abhor the light,
Let those have night, that love the night :
Sweet Phosphor, bring the day !
How sad delay
Afflicts dull hopes ! Sweet Phosphor, bring the day !

Alas ! my light-in-vain-expecting eyes
Can find no objects, but what rise
From this poor mortal blaze, a dying spark
Of Vulcan's forge, whose flames are dark,

A dangerous, dull, blue-burning light,
As melancholy as the night:
Here 's all the suns that glitter in the sphere
Of earth: Ah me! what comfort 's here?
Sweet Phosphor, bring the day!
Haste, haste away,
Heaven's loitering lamp! Sweet Phosphor, bring the day!

Blow, Ignorance! O thou, whose idle knee
Rocks earth into a lethargy,
And with thy sooty fingers hast benight
The world's fair cheeks, blow, blow thy spite!
Since thou hast puffed our greater taper, do
Puff on, and out the lesser too:
If e'er that breath-exiled flame return,
Thou hast not blown, as it will burn:
Sweet Phosphor, bring the day!
Light will repay
The wrongs of night: Sweet Phosphor, bring the day!

THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS.

One more unfortunate,
Weary of breath,
Rashly importunate,
Gone to her death!

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care:
Fashioned so slenderly,
Young, and so fair!

Look at her garments
Clinging like cerements,

Whilst the wave constantly
Drips from her clothing;
Take her up instantly,
Loving, not loathing.

Touch her not scornfully;
Think of her mournfully,
Gently, and humanly;
Not of the stains of her:
All that remains of her,
Now, is pure womanly.

Make no deep scrutiny
Into her mutiny,
Rash and undutiful;
Past all dishonor,
Death has left on her
Only the beautiful.

Still, for all slips of hers, —
One of Eve's family, —
Wipe those poor lips of hers,
Oozing so clammily.

Loop up her tresses,
  Escaped from the comb, —
Her fair auburn tresses;
Whilst wonderment guesses,
  Where was her home?

Who was her father?
  Who was her mother?
Had she a sister?
  Had she a brother?
Or, was there a dearer one
Still, and a nearer one
  Yet, than all other?

Alas, for the rarity
Of Christian charity
  Under the sun!
O, it was pitiful!
Near a whole city full,
  Home she had none.

Sisterly, brotherly,
Fatherly, motherly

Feelings had changed:
Love, by harsh evidence,
Thrown from its eminence;
Even God's providence
Seeming estranged.

Where the lamps quiver
So far in the river,
With many a light,
From window and casement,
From garret to basement,
She stood, with amazement,
Houseless, by night.

The bleak wind of March
Made her tremble and shiver;
But not the dark arch,
Or the black flowing river:
Mad from life's history,
Glad to death's mystery,
Swift to be hurled, —
Anywhere, anywhere
Out of the world!

In she plunged boldly, —
No matter how coldly
The rough river ran, —
Over the brink of it:
Picture it, think of it,
Dissolute man!
Lave in it, drink of it,
Then, if you can!

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care:
Fashioned so slenderly,
Young, and so fair!

Ere her limbs frigidly
Stiffen too rigidly,
Decently, kindly,
Smooth and compose them;
And her eyes, close them,
Staring so blindly!

Dreadfully staring
Through muddy impurity,

As when with the daring
Last look of despairing
Fixed on futurity.

Perishing gloomily,
Spurred by contumely,
Cold inhumanity,
Burning insanity,
Into her rest!
Cross her hands humbly,
As if praying dumbly,
Over her breast!

Owning her weakness,
Her evil behaviour;
And leaving, with meekness,
Her sins to her Saviour!

THE ANTIQUE SEPULCHRE.

O EVER-JOYOUS band
Of revellers amidst the southern vines!
On the pale marble, by some gifted hand,
Fixed in undying lines!

Thou with the sculptured bowl,
And thou, that wearest the immortal wreath,
And thou, from whose young lip and flute the soul
Of music seems to breathe!

And ye, luxuriant flowers,
Linking the dancers with your graceful ties,
And clustered fruitage, born of sunny hours
Under Italian skies!

Ye, that a thousand springs,
And leafy summers, with their odorous breath,
May yet outlast; what do ye there, bright things,
Mantling the place of death?

Of sunlight, and soft air,
And Dorian reeds, and myrtles ever green,
Unto the heart a glowing thought ye bear;—
Why thus, where dust hath been?

Is it to show how slight
The bound that severs festivals and tombs,
Music and silence, roses and the blight,
Crowns and sepulchral glooms?

Or, when the father laid
Happy his child's pale ashes here to sleep,
When the friend visited the cypress shade,
Flowers o'er the dead to heap;

Say if the mourners sought
In these rich images of summer mirth,

These wine-cups and gay wreaths, to lose the thought
Of our last hour on earth?

Ye have no voice, no sound,
Ye flutes and lyres, to tell me what I seek;
Silent ye are, light forms with vine-leaves crowned;
Yet to my soul ye speak.

Alas, for those that lay
Down in the dust without their hope of old!
Backward they looked on life's rich banquet-day,
But all beyond was cold.

Every sweet wood-note, then,
And through the plane-trees every sunbeam's glow,
And each glad murmur from the homes of men,
Made it more hard to go.

But we, when life grows dim,
When its last melodies float o'er our way,
Its changeful hues before us faintly swim,
Its flitting lights decay;

Even though we bid farewell
Unto the spring's blue skies and budding trees,
Yet may we lift our hearts, in hope to dwell
'Midst brighter things than these;

And think of deathless flowers,
And of bright streams to glorious valleys given;
And know, the while, how little dreams of ours
Can shadow forth of heaven!

ET EXALTAVIT HUMILES.

How cheerfully the unpartial sun
Gilds with his beams
The narrow streams
O' th' brook which silently doth run
Without a name !
And yet disdains to lend his flame
To the wide channel of the Thames !

The largest mountains barren lie,
And lightning fear,
Though they appear
To bid defiance to the sky ;
Which in one hour
We 've seen the opening earth devour,
When in their height they proudest were.

But the humble man heaves up his head,
Like some rich vale
Whose fruits ne'er fail,
With flowers, with corn, and vines o'erspread ;
Nor doth complain,
O'erflowed by an ill-seasoned rain,
Or battered by a storm of hail.

Like a tall bark treasure-fraught,
He the seas clear
Doth quiet steer :
But when they are to a tempest wrought,
More gallantly
He spreads his sail, and doth more high,
By swelling of the waves, appear.

For the Almighty joys to force
The glorious tide
Of human pride
To the lowest ebb ; that o'er his course,
Which rudely bore
Down what opposed it heretofore,
His feeblest enemy may stride.

But from his ill-thatched roof he brings
The cottager,
And doth prefer
Him to the adored state of kings:
He bids that hand,
Which labor hath made rough and tanned,
The all-commanding sceptre bear.

Let, then, the mighty cease to boast
Their boundless sway:
Since in their sea
Few sail, but by some storm are lost.
Let them themselves
Beware; for they are their own shelves:
Man still himself hath cast away.

LINES TO A WITHERED LEAF SEEN ON A POET'S TABLE.

Poet's hand has placed thee there,
Autumn's brown and withered scroll!
Though to outward eye not fair,
Thou hast beauty for the soul.

Though no human pen has traced
On that leaf its learned lore,
Love divine the page has graced, —
What can words discover more?

Not alone dim Autumn's blast
Echoes from yon tablet sere, —
Distant music of the past
Steals upon the poet's ear.

Voices sweet of summer hours,
Spring's soft whispers murmur by;
Feathered songs from leafy bowers
Draw his listening soul on high.

SONG FOR AUGUST.

Beneath this starry arch,
Naught resteth or is still ;
But all things hold their march,
As if by one great will.
Moves one, move all ;
Hark to the footfall !
On, on, for ever.

Yon sheaves were once but seed :
Will ripens into deed ;
As cave-drops swell the streams,
Day thoughts feed nightly dreams,
And sorrow tracketh wrong,
As echo follows song, —
On, on, for ever.

By night, like stars on high,
The hours reveal their train;
They whisper and go by;
I never watch in vain.
Moves one, move all;
Hark to the footfall!
On, on, for ever.

They pass the cradle head,
And there a promise shed;
They pass the moist new grave,
And bid rank verdure wave;
They bear through every clime
The harvests of all time,—
On, on, for ever.

THE INDIAN BURYING-GROUND.

In spite of all the learned have said,
I still my old opinion keep;
The posture that we give the dead
Points out the soul's eternal sleep.

Not so the ancients of these lands, —
The Indian, when from life released,
Again is seated with his friends,
And shares again the joyous feast.

His imaged birds, and painted bowl,
And venison, for a journey dressed,
Bespeak the nature of the soul, —
Activity, that knows no rest.

His bow, for action ready bent,
And arrows, with a head of stone,
Can only mean that life is spent,
And not the old ideas gone.

. . . . .

By midnight moons, o'er moistening dews,
In habit for the chase arrayed,
The hunter still the deer pursues, —
The hunter and the deer, a shade!

And long shall timorous Fancy see
The painted chief and pointed spear;
And Reason's self shall bow the knee
To shadows and delusions here.

THE END.

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